

**Field Trip Report: Ellis Creek and Shollenberger Park**  
**October 9, 2011**  
**Trip Leader: Peter Colasanti**

Good weather, birds and company came together as the always informative and entertaining Peter Colasanti led us around these popular Petaluma birding sites. We started at the Ellis Creek Water Recycling Facility where we had good looks at **Common Gallinule** (back from taxonomic hiatus as **Mere Moorhen**), a short serenade by a **Sora**, and brief encounters with **Great-tailed Grackle** and **Peregrine Falcon**.

On our return walk, we could see a throng of birders on the south dike of Shollenberger Park, so



*Sharp-tailed Sandpiper*

we headed there to see the **Sharp-tailed Sandpiper**. This bird was the highlight, eclipsing three **Pacific Golden Plovers** and a perched **White-tailed Kite** in juvenile plumage.

The **Sharp-tailed Sandpiper** nests in the Siberian Arctic and migrates far south to Australia and New Zealand. The juvenile we saw obviously took a wrong turn. It was a life bird for most of us, but what's exciting for the birder is often not good news for the bird. One wonders where this

wayward migrant will end up. With many raptors, waterfowl and shorebirds, we recorded 73 species for the day.

By Peter Colasanti and Dave Herrema  
Photo by Len Blumin